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Memo For Record

Subject Discoverer 17 April 1959

1 A briefing was presented to the following officers by Col Harry Evans on this date:

Maj Gen Estes — Col C.C. Andrews
Mr. W. Preston — Col Leo P. Geary
Maj Gen Watson — Col F.J. Dillon
B/Gen Bowsher — Col R.D. Kemp
B/Gen Greer — Maj Donald Floyd
Mr. L.C. Meyer

2 Col Evans covered the background of the Discoverer program which included the authorization for 19 Thor 117L packages. This was subsequently reduced to 13 Thors to include 3 Bio medical payloads, two Engineering tests and 8 Corona payloads. The CIA would procure the Corona payloads handle White House approval and weather and process the outputs of the 8 shots.

3 With the proposed addition it would allow for a total of 17 shots in CY 59. with the remainder in CY 60. The addition

would include 12 shots of the same type of package as the original Corona. This would total out at 25. BMD has authority to procure 19 Thor-1176 systems and require authority for 6 additional Thor-1176 less payload.

4. BMD requires a cover plan for the 12 shots and desires that this be kept to the attention of the people preparing the Sentry cover plan.

5. Discussion started on the possible use of the last four shots for Discoverer VIII. The Army-Army mapping and charting satellite. Nothing firm on this as it is more on a rumor stage. As a result of this discussion Gen. Bowsher asked Intelligence to substantiate this claim by more facts regarding their position in a memo to ARPA that more target information is required in lieu of mapping as the present mapping and charting data is sufficient for the time being in view of the CEP errors of the existing missiles. Such a paper will be prepared by Intelligence.

6. The advisability of the Air Force taking over the program from Corona shot #9 was discussed. Gen Watson would prefer the Air Force to handle the operation, weather data, White House approval, output from Corona, and ground processing equipment.

It was remarked that the President had made a decision on the follow on program it was agreed to investigate Gen Watson's position after the approval paper was received.